



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 3010034

Applicant Name: David Lee

Address of Proposal: 8600 Aurora Ave N

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a change of use from motel (8,507 sq. ft.) and office (783 sq. ft.) to 21 apartment units and office (1,426 sq. ft.). Surface parking for 21 vehicles to be provided.

The following approval is required:

SEPA - Environmental Determination - Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

SEPA DETERMINATION: ☐ DNS ☐ MDNS ☐ EIS

☒ DNS with conditions

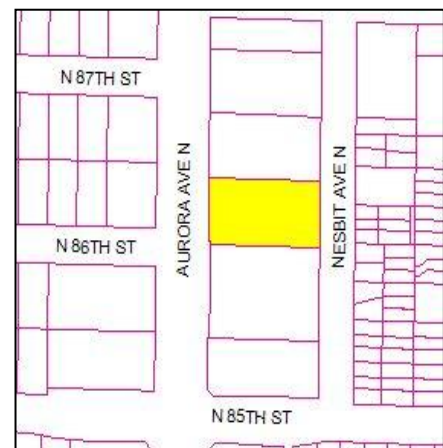
☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition, or another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND DATA

Site & Area Description

The subject property is located on the east side of Aurora Avenue north midway between N. 85th and N. 88th streets. The property is a through lot; a one-way driveway heads eastbound through the parking area from Aurora to Nesbit Avenue N. The site is approximately 105' wide by 190' deep. Aurora Avenue North is a Principal Arterial with three lanes of traffic in each direction and a two-way left turn lane in the middle.

The site and other properties along Aurora Avenue N. are zoned Commercial 1 with a height limit of 65 feet (C1-65). The block



to the east facing Nesbit Ave N. is zoned Lowrise 3 multifamily (L3). Adjacent uses are a Travellodge motel to the south, and a retail store, Blumthal Uniforms and Equipment, to the north. Other uses on the block facing Aurora include a towing operation, fabric store, and fast food restaurant. Nesbit Ave N. is lined with newer townhouses and some mid-century multiplexes.

Proposal

The applicant is applying to convert the motel use (Way West motel) to residential with ground floor commercial. The structure has already undergone the change to residential; the proposed application is the result of code enforcement. There are currently 23 units including a manager's unit, plus one 783 s.f. office space. The changes will reduce the number of units to 21; the manager's unit will be converted to office; an existing attic unit is not up to code and will be removed. Tenants from these two units will be relocated.

Additional work on site will add a retaining wall and fill a small area on the north side of Building A (the building closest to Aurora) to create additional parking spaces. Following this change from landscaping to parking, code requirements for both open space and parking will be met.

Public Comments

The public comment period ran from 3/26/09 to 4/8/09. No public comments were received.

ANALYSIS – SEPA

The initial disclosure of potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant and annotated by the Land Use Planner. The information in the checklist, the supplemental information submitted by the applicant and the experience of the lead agency with the review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy

Since the change of use for the project exceeds the exempt level, an environmental review resulting in a Threshold Determination is required pursuant to the Seattle State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), WAC 197-11, and the Seattle SEPA Ordinance (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05). Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. The Overview Policy states, in part, "Where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation" subject to some limitations. Under such limitations/circumstances (SMC25.05.665) mitigation can be considered. Thus a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

Short-term Impacts

The duration of construction is anticipated to be one week in total. The site work for building the retaining wall and fill (2 truck loads) in order to increase the parking area is anticipated to take about two days. The time when vehicular circulation through the parking lot would be less than optimal is anticipated to be limited to several hours on these days, during the following activities:

- concrete truck accesses site to fill forms for the new retaining wall;
- fill is placed behind the wall (2 truck loads);
- surface of new parking is asphalted and striped.

Interior work will include checking ventilation hoods and smoke detectors; removing the attic unit, and minor interior work to the existing manager's unit to create an office space in its place.

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected:

- minor decreased air quality due to suspended particulate from building activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment;
- minor increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel;
- increased noise; and
- consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts:

- The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code regulates site excavation for foundation purposes and requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of construction.
- The Street Use Ordinance requires debris to be removed from the street right-of-way, and includes regulations for maintaining circulation in the public right-of-way.
- Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality.
- The Building Code provides for construction measures in general.
- The Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the city.

Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most short-term impacts to the environment. However, due to the proximity of residential uses, further analysis of some construction impacts is warranted. The following is an analysis of the short-term impacts to the environment as well as mitigation.

Noise

Construction will include some minor interior work within the existing buildings. Due to the proximity of on-site residences and neighboring residential uses, the limitations of the Noise Ordinance are found to be inadequate to mitigate the potential noise impacts. Pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC.25.05.665) and the SEPA Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675 B), mitigation is warranted. Hours of construction will therefore be limited as detailed at the end of this decision.

Additionally, tenants should be notified of the anticipated dates of work, including dates for the exterior site work. While the parking lot is reportedly underutilized, tenants should be given warning about the site work, allowing them an opportunity to park in areas not directly adjacent to the work to minimize conflicts.

Air Quality

Construction activities, including construction worker commutes, truck trips, the operation of construction equipment and machinery, and the manufacture of the construction materials themselves result in increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions which adversely impact air quality and contribute to climate change and global warming. While these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant due to the relatively minor contribution of greenhouse gas emissions from this project.

Long-term Impacts

Unmitigated long-term or use-related impacts are not anticipated from this proposal. Relocation of 2 tenants will be mitigated by the City's Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance that provides relocation assistance to low income tenants. Since this structure has already been converted to residences, the formal change of use process will likely increase the safety of the existing structures since it triggers checks on ventilation and fire alarms.

Summary

The Department of Planning and Development has reviewed the environmental checklist submitted by the project applicant; and reviewed the project plans and any additional information in the file. As indicated in the checklist, this action will result in minor adverse impacts to the environment. However, the anticipated short-term and long-term impacts can be mitigated through the certain conditions which have been discussed and are stated below.

Other than these specific conditions, codes and development regulations applicable to this proposed project will provide sufficient mitigation of other potential impacts pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

DECISION - SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C), including the requirement to inform the public agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- ☒ [X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.
- ☐ [] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.

CONDITIONS – SEPA

During Construction

1. *Noise* - All construction activities are subject to the limitations of the Noise Ordinance. Construction activities (including but not limited to interior demolition, interior construction, deliveries, and site work) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays from 7 a. m. to 6 p. m.
2. *Schedule of Work* - After permit issuance, all residents shall be provided with an anticipated schedule of work, including site work to allow residents to anticipate and avoid potential congestion in the parking lot during these times.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: August 3, 2009
Holly E. Anderson, Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

HEA:bg

I:\AndersHo\PROJECT REVIEW\3010034 - 8600 Aurora Ave N.doc